THE QUICKENING

BY

FRANCIS LYNDE

CHAPTER XIV.—(Continued.)

The hands of his watch were pointing to 8 o'clock the following morning when Tom made his way through the throng in the Grand Central station and found a cab. The sailing hour of the Baltic was 10, and he picked his cabman accordingly.

"I shall want you for a couple of hours, and it's double fare if you don't miss. 271 Broadway, first," was his filip for the driver; and he was speedily rattling away to the down-town address.

The taking of the cab was his first mistake, and he discovered it before he had gone very far. Time was precious, and the horse, pushed to the police limit, was too slow. Tom signaled his Irishman.

"Get me over to the Elevated, and then go to Madison Square and wait for me," he ordered; and by this change of conveyance he obtained his mail and won back to the Fifth Avenue Hotel by late breakfast time.

From that on, luck was with him. The Farleys, father and son, were in the lobby of the hotel, waiting for the others to come down to the cafe breakfast. Tom saw them, confronted them, and went at things very concisely.

"I have come all the way from Boston to ask for a few minutes of your time, Mr. Farley," he said to the president. "Will you give it to me now?"

"Surely!" was the genial reply, and the promoter signed to his son and drew apart with the importunate one. "Well, go on, my boy; what can I do for you at this last American moment?—some message from your good father?"

"No," said Tom, shortly; "it's from me, individually. You know in what shape you have left things at home; they've got to be stood on their feet before you go aboard the Baltic."

"What's this—what's this? Why, my dear young man! what can you possibly mean?"—this in buttered tones of the gentlest expostulation.

"I mean just about what I say. You have smashed Chiawassee Consolidated, and now you are going off to leave my father to hold the bag. Or, rather, I should say, you are taking the bag with you."

"Why, Thomas—you must be losing your mind! You've—you've been studying too hard; that's it—the term work up there in Boston has been too much for you."

"Cut it out, Mr. Farley," said Tom, savagely, all the Gordon fighting blood singing in his veins. "You've got a thing to do, and it is going to be done before you leave America. Will you talk straight business, or not?"

"And if I decline to discuss business matters with a rude school-boy?" he intimated mildly.

"Then it will be rather the worse for you," was the defiant rejoinder. "Acting for my father and the minority stockholders, I shall try to have you and your son held in America, pending an expert examination of the company's affairs."

It was a long shot, with a thousand chances of missing. If there was anything criminal in the Farley administration, the evidences were doubtless well buried. But Tom was looking deep into the shifty blue eyes of his antagonist when he fired, and he saw that he had not wholly missed. None the less, the president attempted to carry it off lightly.

"What do you think of this, Vincent?" he said, turning to his son. "Here is Tom Gordon—our Tom—talking wildly about investigations and arrests, and I don't know what all. Shall we give him his breakfast and send him back to school?"

Tom cut in quickly before Vincent could make a reply.

"If you're sparring to gain time, it's no use, Mr. Farley. I mean what I say, and I'm dead in earnest." Then he tried another long shot: "I tell you right now we've had this thing cocked and primed ever since we found out what you and Vincent meant to do. You must turn over the control of Chiawassee Consolidated, legally and formally, to my father before you go aboard the Baltic, or—you don't go aboard!"

"Let me understand," said the treasurer, cutting in. "Are you accusing us of crime?"

"You will find out what the accusation is, later on," said Tom, taking yet another cartridge from the long-range box. "What I want now is a plain, straightforward yes or no, if either of you is capable of saying it."

The president took his son aside.

"Do you suppose Dyckman has been talking too much?" he asked, hurriedly.

Vincent shook his head.

"You can't tell * * * it looks a little rocky. Of course, we had a right to do as we pleased with our own, but we don't want to have an unfriendly construction put on things."

"But they can't do anything!" protested the president. "Why, I'd be perfectly willing to turn over my private papers, if they were asked for!"

"Yes, of course. But there would be misconstruction. There is that contract with the combination, for example; we had a right to manipulate things so we'd have to close down, and it might not transpire that we made money by doing it. But, on the other hand, it might leak out, and there'd be no end of a row. Then there is another thing: there is somebody behind this who is bigger than the old soldier or this young football tough. It's too nicely timed."

"But you wouldn't turn the property over to Gordon, would you?"

The younger man's smile was a mere contortion of the lips. "It's a sucked orange," he said. "Let the old man have it. He may work a miracle of some sort and pull out alive. I should call it a snap, and take him up too quick. If he wins out, so much the better for all concerned. If he doesn't, why, we left the property entirely in his hands, and he smashed it. Don't you see the beauty of it?"

The president wheeled short on Tom. "What you may think you are extorting, my dear boy, you are going to get through sheer good-will and a desire to give your father every chance in the world," he said, blandly. "We discussed the plan of electing him vice president, with power to act, before we left home, but there seemed to be some objections. We are willing to give him full control—and this altogether apart from any foolish threats you have seen fit to make. Bring your legal counsel to Room 327 after breakfast and we will go through the formalities. Are you satisfied?"

"I shall be a lot better satisfied after the fact," said Tom, bluntly; and he turned away to avoid meeting Major Dabney and the ladies, who were coming from the elevator to join the two early risers. He had seen next to nothing of Ardea during the three Boston years, and would willingly have seen more. But the new manhood was warning him that time was short, and that he must not mix business with sentiment. So Ardea saw nothing but his back, which, curiously enough, she failed to recognize.

Picking up his cab at the curb, Tom had himself driven quickly to the office of the corporation lawyer whose name he had obtained from Mr. Clarkson the day before, and with whom he had made a wire appointment before leaving Boston. The attorney was waiting for him, and Tom stated the case succinctly, adding a brief of the interview which had just taken place at the hotel.

"You say they agreed to your proposal?" observed the lawyer. "Did Mr. Farley indicate the method?"

"No."

"Have you a copy of the by-laws of your company?"

Tom produced the packet of papers received that morning from his father, and handed the required pamphlet to Mr. Croswell.

"H'm—ha! the usual form. A stockholders' meeting, with a resolution, would be the simplest way out of it; but that can't be held without the published call. You say your father is a stockholder?"

"He has four hundred and three of the original one thousand shares. I hold his proxy."

The attorney smiled shrewdly.

"You are a very remarkable young man. You seem to have come prepared at all points."

The conference in Room 327, Fifth Avenue Hotel, held while the carriages were waiting to take the steamer party to the pier, was brief and businesslike. Something to Tom's surprise, Major Dabney was present; and a little later he learned, with a shock of resentment, that the Major was also a minority stockholder in the moribund Chiawassee Consolidated. The master of Deer Trace was as gracious to Caleb Gordon's son as only a Dabney knew how to be.

"Nothing could give me greateh pleasure, my deah boy, than this plan of having youh father in command at Gordonia," he beamed, shaking Tom's hand effusively. "I hope you'll have us all made millionaihs when we get back home again; I do, for a fact, suh."

Tom smiled and shook his head.

"It looks pretty black, just now, Major. I'm afraid we're in for rough weather."

The leave-takings were brief, and somewhat constrained, save those of the genial Major. Tom pleaded business, further business, with his attorney, when the Major would have had him wait to tell the ladies good-by; hence he saw no more of the tourists after the conference broke up.

Not to lose time, Tom took a noon train back to Boston, first wiring his father to try and keep things in order at Gordonia for another week at all hazards. Winning back to the technical school, he plunged once more into the examination whirlpool, doing his best to forget Chiawassee Consolidated and its mortal sickness for the time being, and succeeding so well that he passed with colors flying.

But the school task done, he turned down the old leaf, pasting it firmly in place. Telegraphing his father to meet him, on the morning of the third day following, at the station in South Tredegar, he allowed himself a few hours for a run up the North Shore and a conference with the Michigan iron king; after which he turned his face southward and was soon speeding to the battle-field through a land by this time shaking to its industrial foundations in the throes of the panic earthquake.

CHAPTER XV.

As early as 1 o'clock in the afternoon, the elder Helgerson, acting as day watchman at the iron-works, had opened the great yard gates, and the men began to gather by twos and threes and in little caucusing knots on the sand floor of the huge, iron-roofed foundry building. Some of the more heedful sat to work making seats of the wooden flask frames and bottom boards; and in the pouring space fronting one of the cupolas they built a rough-and-ready platform out of the same materials.

As the numbers increased the men fell into groups, dividing first on the color-line, and then by trades, with the white miners in the majority and doing most of the talking.

"What's all this buzzin' about young Tom," queried one of the men in the miners' caucus. "Might' nigh every other word with old Caleb was, 'Tom, my son, Tom.' Why, I ricollect him when he wasn't no more'n knee-high to a hop-toad!"

"Well, you bet your life he's a heap highen'n that now," said another, who had chanced to be at the station when the Gordons, father and son, left the train together. "He's a half a head taller than the old man, an' built like one o' Maje' Dabney's thoroughbreds. But I reckon he ain't nothin' but a school-boy, for all o' that."

"Gar-r-r!" spat a third. "We've had one kid too many in this outfit, all along."

"Yes, chimed in a fourth; a "huckleberry" miner from the Bald Mountain district. "I don't believe the old man knows, himself. He fit around and fit around, talkin' to me, and never said nothin' more'n that there was goin' to be a meetin' here at 2 o'clock, and Tom—his son Tom—was goin' to speak to it."

Tom and his father entered the building from the cupola side, and Tom mounted the flask-built platform while the men were scattering to find seats. He made a goodly figure of young manhood, standing at ease on the pile of frames until quiet should prevail, and the glances flung up from the throng of workmen were friendly rather than critical. When the time came, he began to speak quietly, but with a certain masterful quality in his voice that unmistakably constrained attention.

"I suppose you have all been told why the works are shut down—why you are out of a job in the middle of summer; and I understand you are not fully satisfied with the reason that was given—hard times. You have been saying among yourselves that if the president and the treasurer could go off on a holiday trip to Europe, the situation couldn't be so very desperate. Isn't that so?"

"That's so; you've hit it in the head first crack out o' the box," was the swift reply from a score of the men.

"Good; then we'll settle that point before we go any further. I want to tell you men that the hard times are here, sure enough. We are all hoping that they won't last very long; but the fact remains that the wheels have stopped. Let me tell you: I've just come down from the North, and the streets of the cities up there are full of idle men. All the way down here I didn't see a single iron-furnace in blast, and those of you who have been over to South Tredegar know what the conditions are there. Mr. Farley has gone to Europe because he believes there is nothing to be done here, and the facts are on his side. For anybody with money enough to live on, this is a mighty good time to take a vacation."

There was a murmur of protest, voicing itself generally in a denial of the possibility for men who wrought with their hands and ate in the sweat of their brows.

"I know that," was Tom's rejoinder. "Some of us can't afford to take a layoff; I can't, for one. And that's why we are here this afternoon. Chiawassee can blow in again and stay in blast if we've all got nerve enough to hang on. If we start up and go on making pig, it'll be on a dead market and we'll have to sell it at a loss or stack it in the yards. We can't do the first, and I needn't tell you that it is going to take a mighty long purse to do the stacking. It will be all outgo and no income. If——"

"Spit it out," called Ludlow, from the forefront of the miners' division. "I reckon we all know what's comin'."

"It's a case of half a loaf or no bread. If Chiawassee blows in again, it will be on borrowed money. If you men will take half-pay in cash and half in promises, the promised half to be paid when we can sell the stacked pig, we go on. If not, we don't. Talk it over among yourselves and let us have your decision."

There was hot caucusing and a fair imitation of pandemonium on the foundry floor following this bomb-hurling, and Tom sat down on the edge of the platform to give the men time. Caleb Gordon sat within arm's reach, nursing his knee, diligently saying nothing. It was Tom, undoubtedly, but a Tom who had become a citizen of another world, a newer world than the one the ex-artilleryman knew and lived in. He—Caleb—had freely predicted a riot as the result of the half-pay proposal; yet Tom had applied the match and there was no explosion. The buzzing, arguing groups were not riotous—only fiercely questioning.

(To be continued.)

THE RED DAB OF DEATH.

Tragic Mark on the Steel Skeleton of the Skyscraper.

"See that big blob of scarlet paint?" said the engineer as he pointed to a girder high up in the skeleton of the new skyscraper. "That red spot means that one of the men working on the building was killed by the girder sweeping him off the structure while being put in position."

The visitor craned his neck and saw a rough patch of vermilion paint on one of the floor girders up on the sixteenth story. "It must be a dangerous life," he said to his engineering friend.

"Yes. Those men up there are working under the chance of instant death at any moment. They'll walk along the topmost girder, 300 feet above the sidewalk—a little path of slippery iron five inches wide—and will lean outward against the wind. You or I couldn't do it for a second.

"Now and again there's an accident. A chap slips. A worker gets hit by a swinging girder and flung off. Another man takes an incautious step and falls off into eternity. The men working near by do their best to get at him if he manages to grab the girder he's falling from, and there are some swift and reckless races with death to get to their comrade at any cost in the five or ten seconds allowed them while strong fingers are slipping away from a slippery beam flange. If the worst happens and the man falls in spite of their efforts, then they apply the dab of red paint, and the ironworkers call it a day. They don't speak much of the man that is gone, as a rule. He's soon forgotten. The men consider it fate.

"You'd think, by the way," went on the engineer, "that the higher up these men worked the more careful they'd become. They arn't particularly careful, but they do guard against the hypnotism of height. One of the men working on a high girder gets paralyzed now and again by a sudden fear that holds him motionless and still on his iron beam.

"The men look out for this sort of thing, and the remedy is to distract his attention by a rough blow on the back or in some cases by exciting him to anger through any means in their power. When the man gets fighting mad he is freed from the paralysis of terror or whatever you may choose to call it. He gets up from his girder to make a rush for the other fellow to do him up, and the moment he is safe he is restrained by the other men.

"Whenever you see a skyscraper framework," concluded the engineer, "each dab of scarlet paint on the iron means that some man has come to his death. Every skyscraper and every bridge is the monument to some little group of unknown workers, laboring at dizzy heights and dallying with sudden death as part of their day's work."—New York Press.

A Cynical Statesman.

The saying that "all men have their price" is ascribed to Sir Robert Walpole. While speaking of a faction in parliament which bitterly opposed some of his measures he said, "You see with what zeal and vehemence these gentlemen oppose me, and yet I know the price of every man in this house except three."

Of some who called themselves patriots he said: "Patriots! I could raise fifty of them within four and twenty hours. I have raised many in one night. 'Tis but to refuse an unreasonable demand and up springs a patriot."

Every mind has its choice between truth and repose. Take which you please—you can never have both.—Emerson.

BATTLE OF THE WILDERNESS

Wisconsin Veteran Gives Graphic Account of Struggle and Death of General Wadsworth.

Wadsworth's division fought on May 5 in the Fifth corps, and in the late afternoon reformed in the Lacy field, with Baxter's brigade of Robinson's division added to his own division. Hancock was fighting hard on the Plank road, with his right flank extended a short distance over the road. General Wadsworth was directed by Warren to march against the confederate left flank, then fighting Hancock. Wadsworth did not go far into the dense woods until he met a heavy skirmish line protecting the confederate flank. The skirmishers yielded quickly, and reported the approach of a force on their flank.

Gen. Roy Stone commanded a splendid Pennsylvania brigade, composed of the One Hundred and Forty-eight,

The Fighting Was Hard.

One Hundred and Forty-ninth, One Hundred and Fiftieth and One Hundred and Fifty-first, I think, writes Maj. Earl M. Rogers of Viroqua, Wis., in National Tribune.

At midnight Wadsworth sent an aid back to Warren, notifying him that the density of the woods and darkness prevented further advance and requested orders. The aid returned with instructions to move forward at 4:30, and report to Hancock. Captain Monteith was sent to the ammunition train to bring up cartridges. He reached the train, awoke Sergeant Watrous, who had mules packed, and they made their way to the line at the hour to move. It was but a short march, where connection was made with Hancock. The confederate left flank being exposed, they withdrew during the night to a distance that relieved their flank.

General Hancock moved his troops to the left, with his right on the Plank road, and directed General Wadsworth to make a change of front with left on the Plank road, and in line with the Secords corps. In executing this change of front Wadsworth's line became disconnected, forming gaps, owing to the density of the wilderness. A perfect division alignment or even brigade connection seemed impossible. A forward movement was made, when the confederate line fell back. The fighting was hard. Limbs and small trees fell from musket firing, which added more confusion to the battle. The difficulty of a mounted officer riding in the woods led General Wadsworth to rein to the ditch on the right side of the Plank road, where his horse was shot. The general mounted a led horse, kept in the ditch, and only went a few yards when the second horse was killed. Mounting a third horse, he was cautioned of the danger, and reined a few feet to the right of the Plank road in the thick timber. The battle up to this time was well with Hancock's command.

There was a lull; then the confederates pushed hard and fought fiercely. General Wadsworth had received troops from the Ninth corps. Word came to Hancock to look out for his left, as the Second corps was going away. The confederates were passing off left when he tried to wheel the troops to the left, when he was close onto an Alabama brigade, which charged and overlapped Wadsworth's right.

The Union line went back in much confusion. General Wadsworth did not rein in his horse to the rear for an instant. His staff, save the writer, were away trying to save the line, and when the general did rein his horse to the rear every man was making in that direction. His last view was his retreating division. It flashed through my mind, "Two cannot live; one must go!" when a ball went through the general's brain and splashed my coat. Then my horse fell.

The confederates could not have been more than 30 feet. The general fell on his back. He had an outside pocket in which he carried his watch, which I reached to take, but rifle balls and unpleasant yells halted me. I ran back a short distance, where I found the general's horse with the rein caught on a snag. I vaulted into the saddle, and was soon with the Sixth Wisconsin.

I then rode to General Warren at the Lacy house, notified him of Wadsworth's death, which is reported in the Rebellion Reports of the Wilderness, and for which service I was brevetted captain, and later at Petersburg as major—twice for gallant and meritorious service.

General Cutler then took Wadsworth's division, and Colonel Bragg, of the Sixth Wisconsin, was assigned to the Pennsylvania brigade, with me as his aid. The Pennsylvanians fought nobly.

Cost of Army and Navy.

The United States army, including the military academy, costs $103,727,000, and the navy $136,000,000.

HE'D GET THE APPLE.

Eddie—Say, mom, give Jessie an apple.

Mamma—Then you'll want one, too.

Eddie—No. Just give it to Jessie. We are going to play Adam and Eve, and she is going to tempt me.

Didn't Care for Expenses.

They were seated at the breakfast table.

"John, dear," said the young wife, "this is my birthday."

"I'm glad you mentioned it, darling," rejoined her husband. "I'll buy you a present the first thing when I get downtown."

"Well," she said, "I hope you won't get any cheap 98-cent affair."

"Of course I won't," he replied. "Why, I would be ashamed to present you with anything that cost less than a dollar."

Simple Truth.

You can only do clean washing with clean soap. You know that cocoanut oil, borax and naphtha are natural cleansers and sterilizers and that they can't harm fabrics. Easy Task soap is the only one that combines these scientifically, and for that reason it cuts washday work in two and does the work better than it ever has been done. Ten cents to test it; money back quickly if it isn't what is claimed for it.

Their Object.

Banks—The women of my town have formed a secret society.

Rivers—A secret society? Surely, that's a misnomer; women don't know how to keep secrets.

Banks—But they know how to tell them, and that's why they formed the society.

Old Advice.

Manager—You never get this scene right. Your business with the sweet peas is all wrong and you forget when you are to speak—you get your lines all mixed up.

Actress—All right, sir, I'll be more attentive and fix the sweet peas and try to get my lines in the right place.

Manager—Your course is very simple. Just mind your peas and cues.—Baltimore American.

Otherwise Hopeless.

"My daughter's voice is to be tried today."

"Have you fixed the jury?"—Cleveland Leader.

We know people who seem to know everything except the fact that they don't know how much they don't know.

Some women are beautiful when they are angry, but generally they are mean and ugly at such times.

And many a coming man neglects to arrive.

SHE RECOGNIZED THE VOICE

And From Remark Made, Also Knew the Party Was Not Engaged in Prayer.

Confidential friends of Louis B. Shields are telling this story about that eminent Republican: A state convention at Columbus had just adjourned and the Cuyahoga county delegates were all back home when somebody suggested a friendly game of poker. The game was going along right merrily at three a. m.

At that hour an officious attendant called up Mr. Shields' residence, which happened to be almost next door.

"This is long distance," said the servant with no warrant of authority whatever. "We are all here in Columbus and can't get home until morning."

"That's all right," came back the reply, "but if that voice I hear in the apartment house next door saying 'that's good' isn't Mr. Shields' then I can't recognize a voice when I hear it at night."

And that is the end of the story, for the voice saying "that's good" was indeed that of Mr. Shields, and it was so near home, so the narrator relates, that there was no use in offering a denial.—Cleveland Leader.

Casey at the Bat.

This famous poem is contained in the Coca-Cola Baseball Record Book for 1910, together with records, schedules for both leagues and other valuable baseball information compiled by authorities. This interesting book sent by the Coca-Cola Co., of Atlanta, Ga., on receipt of 2c stamp for postage. Also copy of their booklet "The Truth About Coca-Cola" which tells all about this delicious beverage and why it is so pure, wholesome and refreshing. Are you ever hot—tired—thirsty? Drink Coca-Cola—it is cooling, relieves fatigue and quenches the thirst. At soda fountains and carbonated in bottles—5c everywhere.

Incorruptible.

The lady of the house hesitated.

"Are my answers all right?" she asked.

"Yes, madam," replied the census man.

"Didn't bother you a bit, did I?"

"No, madam."

"Feel under some obligations to me, don't you?"

"Yes, madam."

"Then, perhaps you won't mind telling me how old the woman next door claims to be?"

"Good day, madam," said the census man.

We live truly in proportion as we go out of ourselves and enter into the fulness of the experience of those whom we serve, and by whom in turn we are served.—Westcott.

Man cannot be happy when idle, unless resting from previous labor.

Small Job.

Him—I was confused for a bit, I confess, but it took me only a moment to collect my wits—

Her—Yes, it couldn't take any longer than that. Go on.

The satirist can talk about the "average man" with impunity, because every man considers himself above the average.